

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

August 28, 2012

Ms. Melanie Haveman  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Wetlands and Watershed Branch (WW-16J)  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Dear Ms. Haveman:

As you are aware, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is currently considering issuing a wetlands fill permit to the Marquette County Road Commission (MCRC) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Sections 301 and 301 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. The MCRC has proposed a new 21.4 mile primary county road, running north-south between U.S. Highway 41 and County Road Triple A, commonly referred to as County Road 595 or CR 595.

I fully support the construction of CR 595. After more than a year of careful examination of several alternatives, it is my understanding that, once completed, CR 595 will provide the most direct route between the Eagle Mine and Humboldt Mill, as well as serve local timber, gravel, emergency services, and recreational interests. In short, the construction of this road will create jobs for people in Northern Michigan.

Throughout this process, I have worked with the MCRC to address the concerns of both the EPA and MDEQ. It is my firm belief that the MCRC has provided all necessary documentation to determine that the construction of CR 595 is the most practical route, with no viable alternative. In addition, proposals to mitigate damage to wetlands and streams have been provided with ample time for review.

As you know, construction of CR 595 will affect 25.81 acres of wetlands and require the construction of 22 stream crossings. The proposed route for CR 595 has 26 stream crossings, as compared to the 32 stream crossings for the alternative route. As this area of Northern Michigan consists of approximately 25 percent wetlands, the proposed route for CR 595 has avoided and minimized impacts to wetlands to the greatest extent possible. All stream crossings have been designed to have minimal long-term impact to streams and wildlife. In addition, it should be noted that the proposed route for CR 595 already has many existing roads and trails.

As the representative of Michigan's Upper Peninsula in Congress, I fully support the construction of CR 595. In addition to the benefit of the improved road, construction of CR 595 will bring both temporary and permanent jobs to the Marquette area. With unemployment high in the Upper Peninsula, any new job opportunities will be helpful for Michigan families

who are struggling to pay their bills and plan for their future. As the EPA retains oversight authority on this proposal, it is my hope that you will remove all objections and allow the project to move forward prior to the spring 2013 construction deadline.

My staff and I look forward to continuing our positive working relationship with the EPA and all stakeholders to resolve this issue in an expeditious and mutually satisfactory manner.

Should you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my Legislative Director, Michelle Lane, or me directly at 202-225-4735.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Benishek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" being more prominent and the last name "Benishek" written in a continuous script.

Dan Benishek M. D.

Member of Congress

Michigan's First District